

Under Represented Ethnic Population Asian/ Asian American & Pacific Islander

Asian Pacific Islander Consumer Leadership Council – Summary Report



Purpose

The Asian and Pacific Islander Consumer Leadership Council (API CLC) was developed in FY 2011 by the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council (A3PCON) Mental Health Committee. This project was funded by the LA County Department of Mental Health, through the API UREP, to develop organizational and community capacity. The primary function of the API Consumer Leadership is to promote advocacy by relaying the API community's interests, service requests and service needs to DMH and other policy makers. This project has paved the way for our API communities to build consumer leaders to be a voice and to advocate on behalf of API's interest and needs to the larger mental health community.

Achievements and Challenges

To develop the API CLC, the A3PCON Mental Health Committee conducted Outreach & Engagement meetings in Service Areas 3, 4, and 8. Consumers in other Service Areas also attended. These meetings were attended by over 100 API consumers and more than 60 expressed interest in joining the API CLC. A3PCON facilitated several interview panels consisting of consumers, API agency staff and API UREP committee members. Out of 29 applicants interviewed, 17 members were selected to the first API Consumer Leadership Council in December, 2011. One third of the members did not speak English. Half of the members did not have any advocacy or leadership experience. The API CLC voted its first officers in February 2012. Additionally, bylaws were established and approved by CLC members in March 2012.

To prepare the members for their work, training in the public Mental Health System, Leadership, Advocacy and Self-care were provided by various professional and consumers advocates. Additional trainings focused on the Recovery Model, Stress Management, Public Speaking, and Cultural Competency to increase the leadership and advocacy skills of the members. These training gave CLC members the confidence and necessary tools to actively participate in county-wide and community meetings sharing inputs as an API consumer.

Additionally, on-going support included opportunities for CLC members to utilize learned skills at various forums for advocacy (e.g. SAAC, SLT, API Hope & Recovery planning, A3PCON Mental Health Committee, and other community meetings).

The richness and diversity of the API communities represented a challenge with regards to cultural and linguistic capacity. Mental health concepts such as wellness, recovery and resiliency were not easy to translate in the various API languages because of the lack of framework of mental health in the culture. These concepts were explained in context through examples.

A third of the CLC members did not speak English, but despite their language challenges, demonstrated their commitment to the goal of the group. Multiple interpreters in Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese were provided for all the trainings.

The CLC members demonstrated their commitment by making extraordinary efforts to learn and to utilize public transportation. Some members took 2 to 3 buses to attend the CLC trainings and other county-wide meetings.

Despite these challenges, CLC members stood firm in their effort to follow through with the API Consumer Leadership Council project. CLC members culminated their achievement through their involvement and active participation at the Mental Health Commission's Public Hearing on the MHSA Annual Budget Review on June 28th, 2012. CLC members joined other consumers and families at this hearing in providing a strong voice to the larger community on the cultural and linguistic barriers that continue to make access to services difficult for the API communities.



API CLC Members

Mariko Okumoto,
Japanese, SA 8 (President)

Nami Roberts,
Japanese, SA 5 (Treasurer)

Chanh To,
Vietnamese, SA 3
Itsuko Takahashi,

Japanese, SA 8

Jae Hoon Lee,
Korean, SA 4

Raymond Kaneko,
Japanese, SA 7 (Vice President)

Daniel Lee,
Korean, SA 2

Jae Hoo Choi,
Korean, SA 4

Rose Eun Sil,
Korean, SA 3

Yun Keung Chan,
Chinese, SA 6

Lolita Namocatcat,
Filipino, SA 2

Maria Tan,
Filipino, SA 5 (Secretary)

Llanette Morgan,
Filipino, SA 8

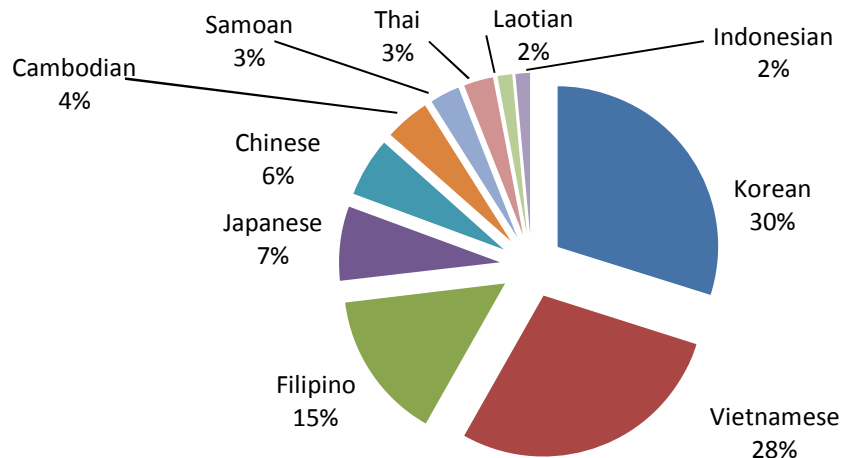
Miae Selig,
Korean, SA 6

Nghia Lieng,
Vietnamese, SA 6

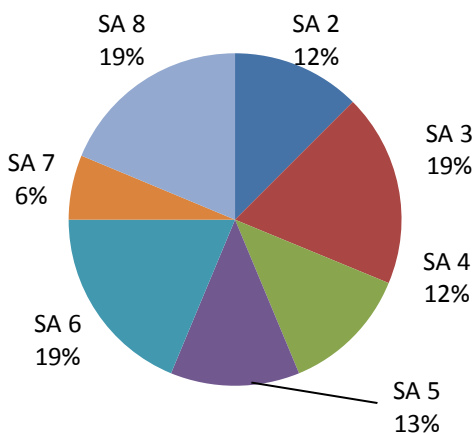
Sarah Fata,
Samoan, SA 3

Breakdown of Focus Group Participants and Council Members

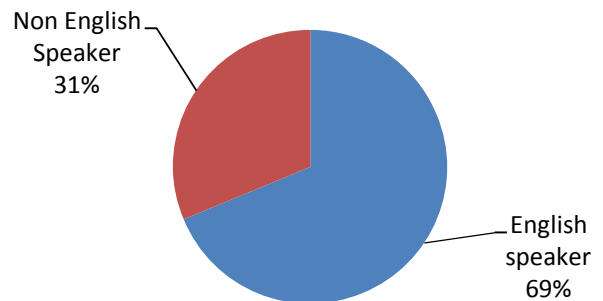
Focus Group Participants



CLC Members: Service Areas



CLC Members: English Capacity



Program Evaluation

Highlights of CLC members' activities from January – June 2012:

- Actively participated in 11 sessions of leadership training and CLC meetings.
- Actively participated in monthly SAAC meeting in service area 3, 4, and 8.
- Actively participated in monthly System Leadership Team meetings.
- Actively participated in community meetings in service area 3, 4, 8.
- Actively participated in the DMH monthly API Hope & Recovery planning meetings.
- Actively participated in monthly A3PCON Mental Health Committee meetings.

API CLC members have become visible, recognizable and heard through their active participation at the above meetings. A3PCON member agencies, agencies that serve the API, and the LA County DMH, view this leadership project as an important asset to the API community.



Thoughts from our API-CLC Members

"I like that I am always learning, I get confidence when I am learning."

"The stigma in our community is very real and affects every aspect of our lives."

"There's a lot of work ahead of us, but coming here and being together is a first step."

"I'm tired of hiding about our mental illness; I'm not going to be quite about this..."

"Being together with my peers brings meaning to my life, I feel connected to a larger family that allows me to be who I am."

"I didn't think I could help others before because of my disease and language barrier. But now, I'm happy that I am able to help others after these trainings."



Acknowledgement

The API CLC would like to acknowledge the Los Angeles County – Department of Mental Health, specifically Dr. Southard (Director), Dennis Murata (Deputy Director), Gladys Lee (former District Chief) whose support made our dream become a reality.

We would also like to acknowledge the following for their contribution in the development and successful implementation of the API CLC:

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Members of the A3PCON Mental Health Committee
Dr. Chong Suh, SSG/APCTC
Elvie Quintos, SSG/APCTC
Isako Kashino, API CLC Program Co-Coordinator
Tam Nguyen, API CLC Program Co-Coordinator
Asian Pacific Family Center (Hua Wen, Stella Ho)
Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (Dr. Trang Hoang, Phuong Tang)
Asian Pacific Residential (Mimi Nguyen, Bosco Ho)
Pacific Asian Counseling Services (Michi Okano, Vichettra He)
DMH Coastal Asian Pacific Center (Helen Chang, Scott Hanada)
DMH Long Beach Asian Pacific Islander Center (Dr. Mitsuru Kubota, Camille Do)
Korean Youth and Children Center (Nayon Kang, Yun Pak)
Ron Schraiber (former LACDMH – Director of Consumer Empowerment)
Trang Mac
Emy Minami
Pam Inaba (President of LA County Client Coalition)
Dr. Sandra Ptanski (LACDMH – Cultural Competency)
Dr. Neelofer Tayyib (LACDMH – UREP Liaison AI/API)

Thank you for helping us make a difference for API consumers, families, and our communities!